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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9159
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1375
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1453
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 6493
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JEDDAH 000366

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/16/2016
TAGS: [ECON](#) [KISL](#) [KPAL](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: OIC AMBASSADOR SURPRISED AT INTEREST IN ANNUAL
ISLAMIC BOYCOTT MEETING

REF: JEDDAH 000236

Classified By: Tatiana C. Gfoeller for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) In a May 14 telephone conversation with Conoff, Ambassador Salem Al Honi, High Commissioner of the Islamic Boycott Office at the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), emphasized the routine nature of the Office's March 2006 meeting of OIC representatives and expressed his surprise at the USG's sudden interest in the 22nd annual session. According to Honi, representatives from all of the OIC member countries attended the March meeting, though he was later reluctant to confirm specifically that a Saudi delegate was present. (NOTE: In a separate conversation with Riyadh PolCouns the same day, SAG Deputy Minister of Commerce for Technical Affairs Fawaz al Alamy stated clearly that a Saudi representative had not attended.)

¶2. (C) Unwilling to provide many details, Honi said that the Boycott Office was established in 1984 with the aim of implementing a boycott under the "same rules" as that of the one practiced by the Arab League, with which there is "some liaison." Honi said that the resolution creating the Office was adopted at a meeting of the member states' representatives to the OIC, without the direct involvement of the countries' foreign ministers. He acknowledged that participation in the boycott is voluntary and that several of the member states have relations with Israel. Honi seemed resigned to this fact and said there was no formal mechanism to exert pressure on individual states to comply with the boycott. With regard to the Office's activities beyond organizing the annual meeting, Honi said vaguely that it played a coordinating role "like any other agency."

¶3. (C) COMMENT: Honi and other OIC representatives' continuing surprise at sudden USG interest in the March meeting of the Boycott Office (see reftel) may be an indication of the body's traditionally ineffectual role. END
COMMENT
Gfoeller